Club Report

FROM THE COIN LA, WISCONSIN

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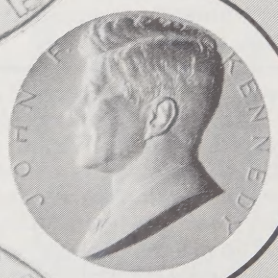

The Story of The JFK Half-Dollar

You Can Be One Of The First To Have One

JFK Half-Dollars Will Tell Future Generations Of Our 1963 Upheaval

A coin is a living reminder of what is sometimes mistakenly called the dead past. It is the concrete link between reality and the nebulous storybook existence of long-gone heroes and the fantastic worlds they lived in.

For one of the best ways man has dreamed up for memorializing people and events — next to painting on cave walls — is the engraver's art practiced on coins and medals.

We have records of monuments erected to memorialize Roman wars. We have portraits of Greek gods, Roman and Byzantine emperors, even Cleopatra — all on coins. Medals from Medieval Europe demonstrate the finest of the engraver's art as they record the likenesses of notables for the ages.

RECENT COINAGE

In the United States these ancient arts have reappered only fairly recently, particularly on our coinage.

Although George Washington's portrait is seen on some early maverick coins, it wasn't until 1909 that an American President was honored by having his likeness placed on a government-recognized coin. That was the first year of the Lincoln cent.

The article presented here is a slightly condensed version of the article "Kennedy Numismatica" as presented in the most recent issue of Coins Magazine. This article deals with all of the numismatic items which have been issued pertaining to Kennedy, while the present presentation deals only with those aspects relating to the half-dollar.

Since 1909, of course, other great Americans have been immortalized on our coinage. George Washington gained official recognition on the quarter dollar in 1932, Thomas Jefferson on the five-cent piece in 1938. Franklin Roosevelt appeared on the dime in 1946 and Benjamin Franklin has adorned the half dollar since 1948.

KENNEDY ENSHRINED

But never has an American been honored so shortly after his death as has the late President John F. Kennedy. During the short, hectic weeks following his assassination, thousands of Americans wrote to Congressmen, Senators and members of the government voicing the common sentiment that this young man who gave so much should be enshrined immediately before his countrymen in such a way that he will never be forgotten.

Every one of our coins was suggested as appropriate for the purpose. One writer went so far as to say that Abraham Lincoln, if appraised of the situation, would gladly relinquish his cherished spot on the humble one-cent piece.

Resolutions and bills were introduced in both House and Senate to the effect that President Kennedy's portrait should appear on the quarter, dime, nickel, half-dollar and the silver dollar which is due to reapper in 1964 for the first time since 1935.

However, in early December President Johnson requested Congress to pass legislation which would place President Kennedy's portrait on the half dollar. And after that there was no need for speculation about which coin it would be.

DIES AUTHORIZED

The bill was passed on December 18 and the Mint was authorized to go ahead with the making of dies.

But the Mint had not waited for the passage of the bill and as early as the first week in December Chief Engraver Roberts began work on half-dollar dies. By December 12 the reverse die was in the final stages, trial pieces were struck and work was progressing rapidly on the obverse in order to meet President Johnson's requested first of the year release date.

The large illustrations on the cover depict the new JFK half-dollar, depicted by a composite illustration of the suggested design. To the left is the Franklin half-dollar (1948-1963), from which the legends have been incorporated into a design which utilizes the Kennedy bust and Presidential Seal from the Presidential Medal produced by the Philadelphia Mint.

The new President asked that the obverse carry the portrait used on the Mint medal, the medal designed and struck at the Philadelphia Mint for each new president.

For the reverse of the coin the presidential motif was to be continued with the presidential seal which also appears on the reverse of the Mint medal.

This coin will replace the Benjamin Franklin half dollar now in circulation. And this is the one detail in the production of the new coin which makes collectors unhappy. They wish it were a commemorative coin.

For, although the half dollar will, in a real sense, commemorate the life and untimely death of President Kennedy, to a collector a commemorative coin is one which has only limited production, which because of its relative scarcity is more desirable as a collector's item and which will appreciate much more rapidly as an investment.

The new coins will be released through regular channels — the Federal Reserve Banks — and will be available sometime early in 1964 through local banks.

Although the U. S. half dollar is the most important recognition of the President's death, there are a great many other numismatic items collectors are purchasing during the current wave of interest.

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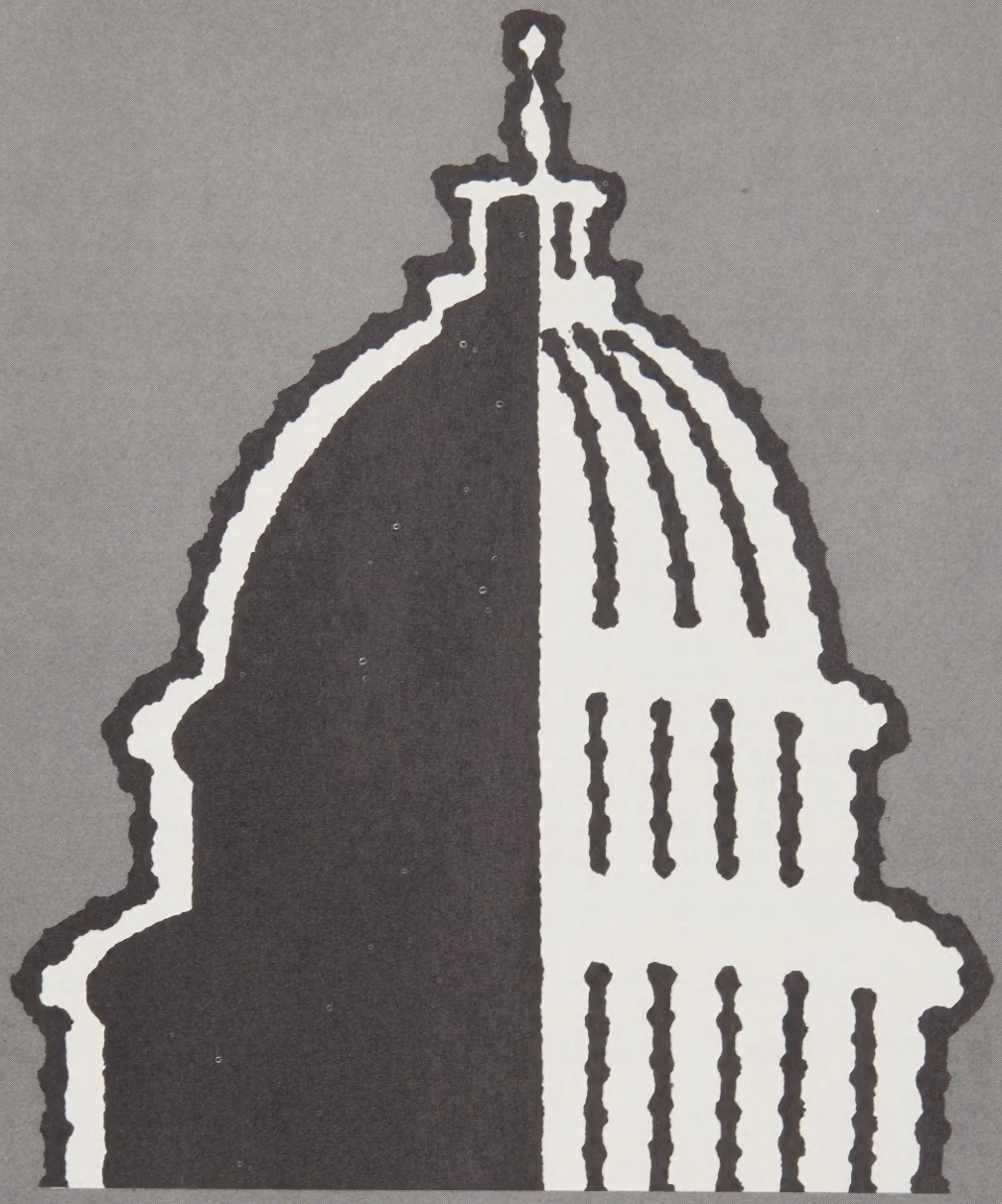


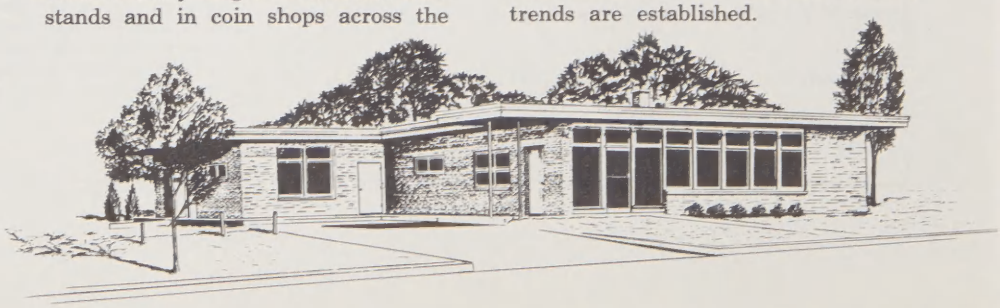
Why They Call Iola The Coin Collectors' Capital

Iola has been appropriately called The Coin Collectors' Capital because many of the nation's 10 million coin collectors are affected by an Iola, Wisconsin industry, Krause Publications.

Located in a building especially designed for numismatic publishing, the working force is a special group of people who serve the coin collecting hobby through these publications: Numismatic News, Coins Magazine and The Coin Dealer.

The Coin Collectors' Capital provides the finest numismatic media in the field including . . . a newspaper of up to 96 pages containing the latest coin news and advertising . . . a four color monthly magazine sold on newsstands and in coin shops across the U. S. and Canada . . . and a monthly magazine edited for coin dealers only.

Iola is truly the capital to which coin collectors look and where new trends are established.



About This Memorial Issue

During recent weeks all publications produced at "The Coin Collectors' Capital" have carried the full story of the JFK half-dollar, as the events concerning it broke on the numismatic scene.

However, rather than just present the story, in the course of their job of keeping the numismatic fraternity fully informed, staff members of these publications put their research facilities to work in the preparation and presentation of the composite photograph of the half-dollar as presented on the cover of this Memorial Issue of the Club Report.

Subsequently these photographs appeared in all the publications.

These articles and photographs have developed an unprecedented interest on the part of collectors across the nation, both in the story of the half-dollar and the photographs, and the JFK half-dollar itself.

In deciding how we could get high quality reproduction of the photographs and article to the most interested collectors, we decided to prepare this Memorial Issue of the Club Report for distribution to the membership of all local clubs at their next meeting.

It was also decided to make an offer of providing a free specimen of the JFK half-dollar to all these collectors who care to subscribe to one of our collector publications for 6 months. We know that everyone is interested in becoming one of the first in his area to possess one of these most significant coins, and in this way we will be able to serve them by helping them attain this goal.

Kennedy

Contd. from Page 2

MANY ORDERS

The Philadelphia Mint has issued a statement that its retail sales outlet has been deluged by orders for the large bronze medal after whose designs the new coin has been patterned.

The obverse of this medal carries President Kennedy's portrait and his name. The reverse bears the presidential seal above an excerpt from a Kennedy speech: "We shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival of liberty."

On either side of the inscription is a flaming torch.

These medals are three inches in diameter, weigh almost half a pound and are available for $3 from the Philadelphia Mint.

However, neither this or any of the other numismatic pieces available in honor of the late President have created interest equal to the new half dollar. None is more appropriately a memorial.

For, in keeping with the tradition of the centuries, the face of President John F. Kennedy on our half dollar will tell future generations, perhaps future civilizations, that 1963 was a year of upheaval in America, a year when men were forced to admit that humanity has changed little through the centuries.

And future civilizations can read another vivid chapter in the long story of mankind told so graphically on coins.

Numismatic News

Subscribe to Numismatic News, the coin collectors' Bible. Up to 104 pages each issue. Send $2.00 for 6 months (13 issues) including free JFK half-dollar.

Coins Magazine

Subscribe to Coins Magazine, the most popular monthly magazine in the coin field. Now with 80 big pages each issue. Send $3.00 for 6 months including free JFK half-dollar.

Combination Offer

Send $4.50 — receive both Numismatic News and Coins Magazine for 6 months including two free JFK half-dollars, one each from the Philadelphia and Denver mints.

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If you desire to retain this souvenir issue intact, you may place your order on a plain sheet of paper, indicating your choice of offers.

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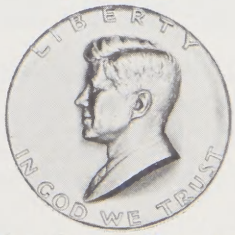

All of the above offers include a free JFK half-dollar, with shipment provided as soon as available. Subscription starts immediately.